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On the Duty of Prayer.

PRAYER, both secret and social, is ridiculed by many, reluctantly practised by others, and greatly neglected by all. With a view to give instruction in, and excite to the right discharge of the duty of prayer, the following essay was written.

IT is an exhortation of St. Paul—in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. These words naturally suggest to our minds several important thoughts on the nature, object, requisites, and reasonableness of prayer. As it is proposed to insist principally on the two last, a few observations on the former will suffice.

By prayer, is not intended a mere request or petition, but a solemn address made to the omniscient God, consisting of various branches, as occasions may require. It is generally divided into seven parts, viz. *Adoration or Invocation*—In this, we immediately call on God, ascribe to

him all perfection, glory, and honor; and ask his gracious hearing. *Confession*—In this, we confess and enumerate our sins, and professedly humble ourselves before God. *Petition*—This arises out of a sense of our wants, and belief of sufficiency, power, and willingness in the Deity to relieve us. In this division we spread all our complaints before him, and make our requests unto him. *Intercession*—In this, we ask for mercies, and deprecate God's judgments, for others as well as for ourselves. *Thanksgiving*—In this, we acknowledge our dependence on God, enumerate his mercies to ourselves and others, and express our thankfulness and gratitude. *Conclusion* is the last part of prayer. In this, we sum up the whole in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, and submit it to the Divine Will; and, as at the beginning, ascribe all praise, honor, and glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

These are the several parts of prayer. Different persons will dwell more or less on each as

circumstances may require.—Much has been said respecting the propriety of written forms, and extempore prayer. Either, if properly expressed and accompanied with the heart, will doubtless be acceptable to God. A known and orderly arrangement is best adapted to social prayer, because the audience can more readily and understandingly assent to, and join with the speaker. Yet, the speaker should not be confined to a form; so but that he may adapt himself with propriety to occasions and special occurrences. In private prayer, the regular arrangement of the several parts is not so necessary. Every one may express his own personal feelings and desires at the time, and as in the presence of the omniscient God. But not to enlarge. The nature and design of prayer are the same, both in public and private: It is a making known our requests unto God, and spreading our joys and sorrows before him, acknowledging his property in us and sovereignty over us.

That God is a proper, and the *only* proper object of our prayers needs no labored proof. As omniscient and omnipresent, he is always with us, knows every thought of our hearts, and hears every word of our lips—we can never pray unnoticed. As omnipotent, he can do every thing for us, which is fit to be done. As infinitely wise, he can do for us in the best possible time, and in the best possible manner. And, as infinitely just and good, he can and will hear and answer our requests, so far as will promote his glory and our good.

Thus God is perfectly quali-

fied for a prayer-hearing God: Yet, however, we are not to expect that all our requests will be answered. The matter, time, manner, and temper must be attended to, in all our addresses to the throne of grace. So far as we are deficient in either of these, we have cause to fear a denial of our requests. This consideration brings us to enquire into the *requisites* of prayer.

It is of high importance, that we pay serious attention to what we ask of God in prayer. The matter should be important and solemn, suited to his character and our own; and, our minds seriously attentive to whatever we supplicate of him. We ought not to rush with inattention into the presence of the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity; nor address him with levity, or on trifling subjects. If our prayer does not engage our own attention, we cannot reasonably expect it will engage the attention of the great Jehovah, unless, to punish us for insulting him with solemn trifling.

What then can be said, for the conduct of most people, in their social worship, in the family, and in the house of God? While the master of a family reads a chapter in the Bible, and addresses the throne of grace, how many members are permitted to be absent? How many are busied in family concerns or amusements. There is no proper attention to religion in such conduct—we cannot serve God and mammon.

And no less reprehensible is the conduct of many, when they go to the house of God. With what trifling and inattention do they rush into the Divine pre-

sence? While the throne of grace is addressed, how many indulge wandering thoughts? And in some places there are those who allow themselves to laugh, talk, and gaze on various objects. Thus, they draw near to God with their mouths, while their hearts are afar off.* These things ought not so to be. Lip worship and formality will never bring us unto God.

As we must pay solemn attention to God, and the things we bring before him in prayer, so must we feel a hearty desire for the things we ask. God demands the heart; he sees it, and will not be deceived. Prayer without the heart, is solemn mockery. Should a neighbor, in solemn show, importune us for things, we knew he did not desire, we should resent it as a base insult: yet, how many do thus treat the God who made them? How many in prayer, ask for grace to live holy and godly lives—for grace to deliver them from evil, and keep them out of temptation; yet, immediately, and even of forethought, allow themselves in the profanest vices? Such persons lie unto God; they do not mean what they say. And did they believe God would answer their requests, they would feel offended—they would view it a curse, rather than a blessing. It is no wonder such persons continue stupid in the ways of sin. And, have we not reason to fear, that many such are left of God to strong delusion, to believe a lie? We should take heed how we attempt to deceive, and trifle with the omniscient God. He requires truth in the inner parts. He is a jealous God, and will not give his honor to another.

To render our prayers acceptable to God, we must, also, entertain an unwavering trust and confidence in him. We cannot seriously ask of God things, for which, we trust in ourselves; or which, we believe he is unwilling to grant us; nor, so long as we continue wavering and undetermined in our minds, can we pray acceptably. Want of confidence in the divine goodness, is want of sincerity in asking; and bars a probability of receiving. Agreeably to which, St. James writes—*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.* It is the will of God that we trust and confide in him; but the fearful, the doubting, and the unbelieving are no friends to him and his cause;—they have no love to his character.

Thus, trust and confidence in God are indispensibly necessary to the acceptableness of prayer. But how shall sinners, condemned sinners, trust in a God of inflexible justice! How can they look to him, as a prayer-hearing and sin-forgiving God—a God of infinite mercies!—Here then we turn to the gospel provision, to Jesus Christ the great high priest of our profession; (God, out of him, is a consuming fire.) Christ hath offered himself an atonement and sacrifice for sin, and by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption; and having broken down the middle wall of partition between God and us, we now have access

to the throne of grace through faith in his blood. All that come unto God by *Him*, will be accepted. For this we have the words of eternal truth ;—*Seek and ye shall find ; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, ye shall receive.* This foundation is sure. The heavens and the earth shall pass away ; but not one jot or tittle of God's word shall pass till all be fulfilled. Let us then draw near to God in prayer, with firm trust and confidence in him ; for Jesus Christ is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

It is worthy of remark, again, that a temper of humble submission to the will of God, is absolutely necessary to the right discharge of the duty of prayer. The proud look and the haughty spirit God hateth. Pride is never becoming, in such sinners as we are—our sins are an abomination unto God. And it is infinite mercy and condescension in him, that he permits us, even in the name of Jesus Christ, to make our requests known to him, in prayer. To lie low at the footstool of sovereign grace, is the highest position sinners may take. That man who dares to thank God, that he is not so bad as other men, thinks higher of himself than he ought to think ; and has yet to learn, that *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.*

As our prayers should be offered to God in deep humility, so should they be in entire submission to his will. We may not prescribe to him, either the matter, the time, or the manner of the grace we ask. The whole should be submitted to the Di-

vine Will ; for we have no right to claim any blessing from him. Nor do we know what his glory may require ; or, what may be best for ourselves, and the general good. We should always set Christ's example before our eyes. He was meek and lowly in heart, and prayed, saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me ; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.* Such, always, should be our temper and manner in prayer.—God's will should be our will.

Under this article of submission to the Divine Will, it should be observed, that in our prayers, we are not to expect or aim to alter his purposes concerning us. He is of one mind, and who can turn him ? God is absolutely unchangeable. Prayer has been compared to a key to unlock the door of heaven : it is necessary for us, though not for God. It does not bring him down to us, but raises us up to him. He will be enquired of for his blessings ; and we know it is his ordinary way to bestow mercies in the use of means. Our prayer does not, indeed, change the purpose of God, but it is an act of obedience to him, acknowledging his sovereignty and our dependence ; and so puts us in a way of receiving, according to his will, what otherwise we could not receive, because he had determined otherwise not to give it.

It will not be amiss to observe again, that in prayer, perseverance is necessary for the right discharge of that important duty. The apostolic direction is, *Pray and faint not—Pray without ceasing—Pray with all prayer.* To pray acceptably, we should entertain a spirit of prayer at all

times, and actually pray on all proper occasions.

Private and public prayer include all prayers, and are expressly required of us ; and, as public prayer is social, so it extends its requirements to social prayer of all kinds, and on all occasions. Family prayer is specially inculcated. By the evening and morning sacrifice, this duty was taught to God's ancient church ; and our Saviour also taught his disciples a social prayer, and frequently prayed with them as his family. To which we add, prayer with the sick and afflicted. It is not enough that we pray for our families, and for the afflicted, but we must pray *with* them ; it must be a social prayer.

Innumerable are the occasions for secret and social prayer ; hence, said the apostle, in *every thing*, by prayer let your requests be made known unto God. We can be in no situation, nor under any circumstance in life, but some kind of prayer will be proper for us. It is, therefore, of high importance that we maintain a spirit of supplication at all times ; and persevere in its exercises, both secret and social, as occasions shall require. This will afford us a good evidence of a right temper of mind ; but he who prays only on particular occasions, will discover his deficiency, let his gifts of expression be as they may, for the very spirit of prayer is wanting. The life of a real Christian, is a life of prayer. He not only has set seasons for secret and social prayer ; but breathes out to God ejaculations all the day long, in adoration, confession, petition, thanksgivings, or intercessions. Almost every occurrence in life

puts in motion this spirit ; and thus, he grows in grace, and finds a heaven begun in his soul. Thus should we all persevere in this duty, for we are taught that the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much with God.

I will conclude this essay with a few observations on the reasonableness and privilege of prayer. Our daily wants, both spiritual and temporal, teach us the reasonableness of prayer. We cannot do any thing of ourselves, as we ought to do ; and have no claim on God, for any needful good. We can neither do, speak, or think any good, but by divine assistance. As sinners, we deserve God's wrath, and that only—we lie wholly at his mercy, whether we shall have any happiness here, or hereafter. How reasonable then is it, that we should, with all diligence, address the throne of grace, in the name of Jesus Christ, for divine influences and saving mercies ? There can be no help from any other quarter, and without help, we must perish. *This privilege* God gives us, and no creature can deprive us of it ; which is not the case with other means. How then should we prize this ! How diligent should we be in the use of it ! A little delay may be our ruin : God may say, *they are joined to idols, let them alone ; and I will see what their end shall be.*

As our spiritual, so our temporal wants should excite us to the duty of prayer. "In God we live, and move, and have our being." All things come from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. God is the fountain of all our blessings. How

reasonable then is it, that in *every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we make known our requests unto him?*

I will only add—Prayer is a great and high privilege. There is no mean of salvation exceeds it. In prayer, we have the nearest approach to God we can have on earth; and the sweetest communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son. It is a powerful mean to humble man, and exalt God—to restrain us from sinning, and draw down divine blessings. The habitual practice of prayer, will keep up a feeling sense of our dependence on God, and of his goodness towards us. And such a solemn sense of divine goodness, notwithstanding our ill desert, will tend to excite our gratitude, love, and obedience. Prayer will lead us so to contemplate the attributes of the Deity, that we shall be ready to cry out with David, *How excellent is thy name in all the earth!* Or else, with Job, *Our heart will tremble, and be moved out of his place, because we are as nothing before him.* Thus it tends to set God on the throne, and to keep us in our proper place, low at the footstool of his grace.

Prayer will also excite us to the exercise of charity and forgiveness. How else shall we pray, *Father, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors?* If we forgive not men their trespasses, we shall ask a curse rather than a blessing. The spirit of prayer, is a spirit of forgiveness; and the more we have of it, the more readily we shall forgive one another; and so obtain an evidence, that we are children of our Father who is in heaven.

Finally, Prayer, always puts us in the way of a blessing. It is Gods appointment.—He is with us, while we are careful to be with him; and it is his ordinary way to bestow blessings in the use of means. This duty has been wonderfully followed with spiritual and temporal mercies, which is evident from the word of God; and from the experience of men. But where people have not a spirit of prayer, they appear to have little sense of religion; and soon grow corrupt in faith and morals.—We should, therefore, prize this as one of our best and highest privileges; and daily exercise ourselves in it before the throne of grace.

Let us remember we are sinners on probation, and shall soon be called to account for the things done in the body. All our good things for time and eternity must come from God. Let us, therefore, constantly look to him for them, in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ; and always depend upon the aids of the Holy Spirit, for without him we can do nothing. This will be our only sure way to happiness here, and glory hereafter.

ISRAEL.

Duty of seeking Religious Knowledge.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

IF the following observations on the obtaining of religious knowledge, be thought worth inserting in your Magazine, they are at your disposal.

IT is no uncommon thing to hear people alledging, in exculpation of their deficiency in

religious knowledge their want of sufficient time to devote to that purpose. "During six days of the week," say they, "we are occupied with our secular concerns. On the Sabbath, considerable time is spent in works of necessity, and much in preparing for public worship. After deducting what is necessarily consumed, the time which remains is inadequate for obtaining that knowledge of religion, which we could wish.—But we cannot believe that, on this account, much blame can be attached to us. It is our duty to labor on week-days, for the scriptures themselves teach us that we ought to provide a competency for ourselves and families; and surely God is not so hard a master as to exact of us what we cannot perform."

How much soever this mode of justification may satisfy the minds of some, it is unwarranted by facts, and owes its origin, I fear, to something worse than mere error in opinion. That I am correct, can be demonstrated, I think, by a very simple computation.

I suppose that five minutes of time, in an ordinary way, is amply sufficient for one to read and understand, an octavo page with such a type as is commonly used. To read twenty five pages, would occupy two hours and five minutes. That this allowance is abundant, will appear from a moment's attention to the business. Who is there, who might not, extraordinary cases out of the question, devote two hours and five minutes, out of twenty-four hours, to reading on the Sabbath? Were this reading to afford a *pecuniary* reward of

six-pence a page, we should never be troubled for an answer?

Allowing then twenty-five pages to a Sabbath, a person will read twelve hundred pages in one year. Suppose that a man begins this course when he is twenty years of age; at thirty, he will have read twelve thousand pages. Should he live to be forty years old, he will have read twenty-four thousand pages; if fifty, thirty-six thousand; if sixty, forty-eight thousand; if seventy, sixty thousand, which are equal to one hundred and fifty octavo volumes, of four hundred pages each.

In addition to this, suppose that a person hears two sermons every Sabbath. If each sermon contain sixteen pages, in a year's time he will hear the amount of one thousand, six hundred and sixty four pages.

But this is not all. The advantages derivable from religious conversation, are by no means inconsiderable for obtaining religious knowledge. In a vast variety of cases, no method is more successful. Add to these, meditations, the dispensations of Providence in a thousand forms, and all the nameless sources whence a view of the divine character is obtainable, and who would not adore his heavenly Father, who has kindly required of his creatures, what one would think they could hardly avoid performing.

According to the calculation which has been made, I think it cannot now be denied that almost every man, may, if he please, become extensively acquainted with religious truth.—Every aged man might be a divine, and every young man continually and rapidly advancing

from the first rudiments in the school of Christ, on to perfection.

If any one, after such a view of the subject, be disposed to excuse his ignorance of religion, it is evident that the excuse will not have its origin in truth, but in the disposition of the excuser's heart. Until that disposition be removed, he must be ignorant still. Though such a man have eyes, he seeth not ; and ears, yet he heareth not ; neither doth he understand with his heart. When a person who professes himself to be a disciple of Christ, makes this excuse, he must, to say the least, be strangely deficient in an ardent love of divine attainments. He it is, who has the strongest motives to search those scriptures in which, we think, are contained the words of eternal life. The inactive disciple should, in a peculiar manner, take heed to his ways, lest having a promise of entering into the heavenly rest, he should seem to come short. His calling and election are not, now, made so sure, as not to need, from a holy practice, the evidence of their confirmation.

There are many people who are contented with their ignorance, because, as they say, they have no opportunity to be otherwise. Their work, or their amusements encroach on the evening of Saturday. They retire to sleep at a very early hour, and arise at a very late one in the morning. For a considerable time before the close of the Sabbath, they are talking of matters to be done that evening or the ensuing week ; or are busied in dispatching various domestic concerns, that they may have leisure in the evening for

either making or receiving visits, or attending to some other matters. If they profess to keep the evening succeeding the Sabbath, they retire to rest early on that evening ; receive visits from those who do not keep it, and are ingenious in devising methods to relax from the pain of confinement on that day.— Thus at any rate, the Sabbath is shortened, and the remainder is employed to little better purpose. At meeting, they are perhaps asleep ; or are thinking on something widely different from the word of God. At home, the conversation is turned on trivial subjects, or matters of mere secular business, or any thing to the exclusion of religion ; or if religion be a topic of discourse, it is not unfrequently in such a manner, that its Author is but little honored.

These things being so, what becomes of the apology for ignorance ; for, it should be remarked, the persons who thus conduct, are the very ones by whom the apology is made. Is not ignorance their choice ? Is it to them a pleasant thing, to retain God in their knowledge ? Let them come forth and confess the truth, that they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; that they cannot say, How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ; a day spent in thy courts is better than a thousand ? I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord. With my whole heart have I sought thee ; Oh, how I love thy law ; it is my meditation all the day.

To these persons I will only add, that their probationary state is rapidly closing ; that eternal scenes will soon be un-

folded ; that the judgment will sit, the books be opened ; they will then learn from Him, at whose presence Sinai quaked, that unnecessary ignorance cannot apologize for sin ; but that because he has called and they refused, has stretched out his hand, and they have not regarded, but have set at nought his counsel, and refused his reproof, he now will laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh. To avoid the amazing terror of this dreadful scene, let them flee to the strong hold of safety ; let them diligently search the scriptures, and see if these things are not so ; let them cry after knowledge, and lift up their voice for understanding, seeking for her as for silver, and searching for her as for hidden treasures. Then shall they understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

RURICOLA.

Thoughts on John xii. 25, last clause.

“ And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”

TWO questions will here be considered, viz.

I. What may be understood by a person's life in this world ?

II. What is that hatred of this life which will be attended with life eternal ?

1. The life in this world may include the animal or natural life—the union of soul and body. When the soul and body are separated, this union is dissolved, and the body that was animated by the soul, is reduced to its first principles.

2. By this life all worldly enjoyments may be intended—the

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goods and blessings of the present state ; some of which are the natural supports of life, and the things to which many sacrifice their lives. Here particularly,

(1.) Worldly riches may be comprehended in the phrase, *our life in this world*. These are the darling pursuit of the men of this world. In obtaining those how many have sacrificed their ease, peace, and comfort, if not their lives ?

(2.) Worldly honor may be comprehended in the *life in this world*.

In the hearts of multitudes, honor has been deified, and is it not too much caressed by a great part of mankind ? With some is not that honor that cometh from man, their very life ? Thus it was with Haman : when the king smiled, and advanced him to any dignity, he was exalted beyond expression ; and how highly did he resent it, that Mordecai the Jew would not rise before him, and do him honor ?—Are there not many, the feelings of whose hearts are consentaneous to his ? Now this worldly honor, which is so much idolized, is one thing included in the *life in this world*.

(3.) By this phrase may also be signified sensual and sinful pleasures. Many, like the beasts of the field, seem to be governed by their appetites rather than by reason and religion. This life is a life of sense ; and therefore sensitive enjoyments may be comprised in our *life in this world*.

May not all these things be included in a person's *life in this world* ? Let us now pay some attention to the,

II. And more important ques-

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tion viz. What is that hatred of this life which will be attended with life eternal?

1. Negatively, it is not an absolute hatred, that is here intended; for a real hatred of life, and its comforts, would be contrary to right reason and the laws of God; and altogether inconsistent with the duties we owe ourselves. Our Saviour himself hath set us an example of love of life: when he was in danger in one place, he would depart to another. So he counselled his disciples, when they were persecuted in one city, to flee to another. It is said, he who will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil. Life is a great blessing; and to be cut off in the midst of days, is threatened as the proper punishment of the wicked. Hence it appears, that it is not an absolute hatred of life that is here intended. Nor, is it an absolute hatred of the comforts of this life; because, these are divine blessings, which we ought not to hate and despise; but for which we should give God thanks.

Indeed, worldly honor is but an empty thing, and not worthy an immoderate strife to obtain: Yet it is God who exalts to honor, and men are obligated to improve an eminent station to his glory. Hence it is easily seen, that it is not an absolute hatred that this phrase imports.

2. This hatred is to be understood in a comparative view. We are to hate this life in comparison with the love and concern with which we should exercise for a better. Though absolute hatred of life, and the things of it, be unwarrantable, yet we may comparatively hate

them; i. e. disesteem them, when compared with spiritual blessings. In this sense, by the laws of Christ, we are obliged to hate our friends and near relatives; not absolutely, but comparatively, Luke xiv. 26. Every good man loves his relatives, as in duty he is bound; and yet must, and will hate them, in a sense, i. e. love them less than Christ; as Leah is said to be hated, because Rachel was loved better.

3. By hating the things of this life, is here meant, the esteeming them insufficient to make us happy. How many place their chief happiness in worldly enjoyments? Who will show us any worldly good? is the language of their hearts: but such are so far from hating their lives, in the sense of this passage, that they love life and the things of it, to that degree, as to endanger their eternal life. But those who esteem all things under the sun insufficient to make them happy, or satisfy their souls, have a kind of hatred of life in comparison with those who esteem sublunary things sufficient to make them happy, or place their affections on these things.

4. To hate this life, so as to obtain salvation is, cheerfully to part with it, when evidently called thereto, for the life of the soul. He who so hates the life of the body, as to venture that, for the securing the life of the soul, from a principle of love to God, shall find both, to unspeakable advantage, in the world to come.

We cannot be Christ's disciples, unless we love him better than our own lives—unless we had rather suffer the most cruel bondage, nay, death itself, than

to desert Christ, and his sacred truths.

This trial takes place in times of persecution in the cause of God, and for righteousness' sake. When men's lives are threatened, if they will not deny Christ, they *should hate life*, by willingly laying it down as a sacrifice to the honor of their divine Lord and Master. Thus did many of the primitive Christians—they loved not their lives to the death.

But,

5. This hatred of life includes a cheerful parting with every thing that comes in competition with the service and favor of Christ. All worldly things and enjoyments which are incompatible with the favor and enjoyment of Christ, are so hated by the true Christian, that they appear as nothing. Those who are the true followers of the Lamb, when their graces are in due exercise, are willing, according to divine requirement, to part with every thing that stands in competition with the honor and service of their dear Lord, being willing to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the interest of Christ's cause and kingdom. Such a hatred the great apostle had, and glorified Christ by it, Acts xx. 24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. Also chapter xxi. verse 13. Then Paul answered, what mean ye to weep, and to break my heart? For I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to *die* at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. So also Revelation xii. 11, "For the accuser of our

brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and *they loved not their lives unto the death.*" Such a hatred of life as has been briefly pointed out, is accompanied with eternal life: for he who loves and desires Christ more than every thing, and is willing to give up every thing for him when called to it, shall enjoy him against all opposition from earth and hell. Those who honor Christ with their lives, or estates, or any way suffer in his cause, from attachment to him, he will honor with a crown of righteousness. It is impossible that Christ should hate or forsake those, who thus hate life for his sake. His own unfailing promise is, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Every one who hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall *inherit everlasting life.*

I will close with a few reflections.

1. To overrate this life, and the things of it, is very prejudicial to the welfare of the soul. How many have perished at this door! Says one, many lose their lives by overloving them. He who is so much in love with the life of the body, and the ornaments and delights of it, as, for fear of exposing them, to deny Christ, he shall *lose it*; i. e. lose a real happiness in the other world, while he thinks to secure an imaginary one in this. *Skin for skin* a man may give for his life, but he who gives his soul, his

God, his heaven for it, buys life too dear, and is guilty of the same folly, as he who *sold a birth-right for a mess of pottage*.

2. Hence, it is a dark symptom, when persons prefer the concerns of *this life*, to those of a future. Do not some persons, (if we may judge from appearances) consider that time to be lost, which is not spent in an attention to worldly matters? As though we were sent into the world, only to serve our bodies, and not God and our souls. Let it be for a lamentation!—Oh, tell it not in Gath! that there are so many, even professors of religion, whose seats are often empty in the house of God on the Lord's day, and other seasons of worship. Is this to hate this life in a scripture sense? Is it not rather an expression of hatred of eternal life?

A proper regard for heavenly and eternal things will abundantly support us under the trials of this life, and carry us above the fears of death; it will enable us cheerfully to endure trials, which, in a short time, will issue in eternal life; and to pass through the dark valley which will introduce us to marvellous light, and unutterable and inconceivable joys.

Are these things so? Then let us not love the world and its enjoyments immoderately. Let us not *so* love our *animal* life, as to indulge our carnal appetites, and make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Let us, instead of looking at the things which are seen and temporal, look at those which are unseen and eternal. Let us prefer the favor of God and an interest in Christ, to our *life in this world*; remembering that it

is the great design of Christ's religion, to wean us from this world, by setting before us a better and more enduring substance.

In a word, let us make it apparent, that we cordially embrace Christ, and espouse his cause and interest by faithfully and constantly serving him, and in suffering for him, if called to it in divine Providence. And for our animation and comfort we may consider, that if we suffer, we shall reign with him.

A Letter to a Son at S—.

MY DEAR SON,

YOU know, that I believe in the Christian religion, and have carefully instructed you in its doctrines and duties. You have lately come to an age, to act for yourself; and in all earthly things, you are settled to my mind. Your character is untarnished, your circumstances easy, and your employment and connections respectable. Your moral character has been fair, and I hear with pleasure, that since you have settled at S—, you are esteemed honest, humane, and serious; and that you regularly attend the public and private worship of God. I wish I had equal evidence, that you are acquainted with experimental religion, and live by faith on the Son of God. But alas! I fear it is otherwise. My concern for your welfare has not diminished since you left me, and I am persuaded, you will allow me to continue my affectionate admonitions.

I consider you as peculiarly exposed to fall into a dangerous

error. Your inoffensive character may become a temptation, and lead you to neglect Christ, and depend on yourself for eternal life. I know very well, that it will be hard, and contrary to the pride of your heart, with your applauded morals, to cast yourself as a poor, vile, guilty, hell-deserving wretch, upon the mere mercy of God in Christ. My fears for you are the greater, because I hear, that there are several respectable and influential men, in the town where you live, of considerable abilities, who avow, and warmly advocate the sentiment, that *'If men are upright in their dealings with all, and regular and inoffensive in their outward morality, they will inherit eternal life, and have no reason to be anxious concerning the events of another world.'* My affection has prompted me to write this letter, with a design to guard you against this dangerous error, by candid and scriptural remarks.

I hope it will have no weight with you, that this has been the avowed opinion of the heathen philosophers, and of the Pharisees among the Jews, as it has been also of infidels of the last and present age. I think that this consideration will incline you to be on your guard against it, and examine it well, and compare it with the scriptures, before you think of receiving or approving it. This false opinion was never expressed in a more engaging manner, than by a young ruler of the Jews, to our Saviour. By his address to Christ, he seems to have possessed amiable and obliging manners. He was serious and thoughtful, and applied to Christ on no earthly, or trivial subject, but

with an enquiry which respected his eternal welfare. 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' Christ, in his answer, intimated to him his error, by checking him for calling any one good, whom he did not acknowledge to be God. He in effect told him, that there was no mere man on earth, that could be accounted good, in the sight of the divine law, so that on this ground, they might be entitled to inherit eternal life. 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.' But as he saw this did not satisfy him, that he might offer him further conviction, he bade him, 'keep the commandments;' and particularly mentioned the commands of the second table. The young man, like his fathers, the Pharisees, considered these as only of external obligation, and replied with a modest simplicity, 'All these have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet? Is any thing further required, that I may inherit eternal life?' Thus it seems, he was fully in sentiment with some of your neighbors, and may be considered as one of the most amiable supporters of this opinion. But when you read what is further recorded of him, I think his opinion can have but little weight with you. But that which especially alarms my apprehensions for your safety, is this, the sentiment flatters the pride and independent spirit of the human heart, which you doubtless possess in common with the rest of mankind. I fear this pride will stand in the room of a thousand arguments, to persuade you that the sentiment is true. I will offer you a few considerations,

which, I hope, through grace, will effectually guard you against this error.

This doctrine proposes eternal life on terms very different from the gospel. The gospel doctrine of justification is not on the ground of a legal obedience, and external conformity to the law, nor yet are men to be justified, even on account of any real holiness, which they may have. But on the credit of the righteousness of Christ alone, who is the sinner's only way of access to God, to which righteousness he becomes entitled, not by his own works but by faith alone. But the other opinion places the hope of salvation in the sinner's unblemished morals.

To this your neighbors will probably reply, 'We do not contend that external morality is the ground of justification, and we expect to be saved by Christ. We depend on him, for the pardon of our sins. But far be it from us, to think so unworthily of Christ, as to suppose that he will suffer any to perish, who are upright and useful in their lives, for want of an interest in his redemption.' But you will easily discover, that in such a reply, they manifestly show, that their dependence is fixed where the young ruler's was. The statement is only varied a little, to accommodate it to the Christian name. You will see that their dependence for being accepted by Christ, and justified through him, is on their own supposed goodness. At the best, they join their own goodness with the redemption of Christ, as the ground of acceptance and salvation: you will not find however, that the scriptures speak of any such union. They set

forth Christ, as the only Saviour, and the end of the law for righteousness, to such as believe. Thus you see, that the opinion which they hold very much lessens the glory of Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, and our obligations to him and dependence on him for salvation. According to this, Christ is only a sharer with the sinner in the merit of his justification with God; or, at least, the sinner has by his own goodness made it very specially suitable, that Christ should entitle him to his merits.

This proud sentiment also debases the law of God, and the nature of holiness. It insinuates, that holiness consists principally, in a regular life, and an inoffensive conduct, and that God requires, and can with propriety require very little more than this of his creatures. This external morality many affect, who even deny the Christian religion. Is this, my son, the pure spirit of divine love, so feelingly described, and so illustriously exemplified, in the holy scriptures? Are holiness, and the law of God, after all that is said about them in the holy scriptures, reduced to this? If so, I confess I cannot see why the question of the young ruler was not quite pertinent—'What lack I yet?'

In the same proportion as this sentiment debases holiness, and the law of God, it diminishes the idea of the extreme evil and vileness of sin. On this principle sin is less contrary to the law of God, which is a standard of holiness, than has been supposed, and arises not from enmity against God, or aversion to, and rebellion against his government; but rather from ignorance, bad education and com-

panions, and violent appetites, or some accidental cause; and is deserving of a much less punishment, than that which is threatened.

It also places sin and holiness essentially in things, in which the word of God does not principally place them. This principle makes the essential things of religion to consist in apparent honesty, humanity, and a fair morality. But the scriptures place them in the heart; and they speak of these amiable morals, as being but the natural productions of an holy heart. God demands the heart. 'My son, give me thy heart.' And this is what the sinner must yield, or perish; for God seeth not as man seeth. Man judgeth according to appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.

This principle also denies the scriptural doctrine of the entire depravity of the sinner's heart. For according to it, there can scarce be found in a whole nation, half a dozen abandoned wretches in an age, who, are more than half depraved. The external conduct of almost all, is under such powerful restraints that they act decently, and appear but partially depraved, in the sense of this opinion; whereas you know, that the scriptures represent the carnal heart, as utterly corrupt,—at enmity against God,—not subject to his law—and so dead in trespasses and sins, that every imagination of it is only evil continually.

This erroneous opinion goes also to the denial of the necessity of regeneration, or represents it as a very different thing from the description given of it in the scriptures. These, represent regeneration as a real

change of heart—a new creation—life from the dead—being brought out of darkness into marvellous light—and from being like unto their father the devil, to become one with Christ. And must all this be construed away, into a mere ceremonial regularity, which may arise only from circumstances, and accidental causes? It cannot be reasonably believed.

I hope that in writing to you, I need not enlarge much on this subject. You see that this opinion flatters human pride—offers eternal life on terms different from the gospel—robs Christ of the glory of being an whole Saviour—debases the law, and the nature of holiness—takes away the evil of sin—describes sin and holiness principally in things in which the scriptures do not principally place them—denies the entire depravity of men—regeneration, and all the peculiar doctrines by which the gospel is distinguished from the philosophical opinions of such, as either deny revealed religion, or deprive it of all those doctrines, which do not comport with their sinful desires.

You will easily discover, that however agreeable such opinions may be to your heart, you must give up the bible, before you can embrace them; for they are altogether irreconcilable with each other. And however specious the arguments may appear, by which they may be urged upon you, (and much is said, and with much subtilty in their support) one answer will always be sufficient—*They are offered in behalf of unscriptural opinions.*

I cannot forbear suggesting my fears, that the flattering address of these sentiments, to the

natural pride and corruptions of your heart, and to the fair character which you sustain for external morality, will insensibly gain upon your reason and conscience, and that you will gradually become a kind of infidel in fact, while you retain the Christian name. Let me intreat you to study the bible, and refuse to listen to those, who would persuade you to disbelieve its fundamental truths, lest you bring ruin on yourself, and grieve

Your affectionate father,
July 1, 1805. L.

From the Christian Observer.

*On the Connection between the
Grace of God and a Holy Life.*

THERE is in many a strange desire of separating what God hath joined together—the grace of God and the righteousness of man. One set of persons exalt the grace of God, and speak in the loftiest terms of the gospel of Jesus Christ; but say little of the duties of man and the obedience which is required of him: as if the bare knowledge of the gospel scheme were to be substituted in the place of true holiness; or as if it were wholly unnecessary to enter into the detail of that obedience which man ought to perform. Others, equally unreasonable, insist exclusively upon the importance of moral practice, and view with jealousy every attempt to give prominence to the doctrines of grace; as if a blow were thereby aimed at morality, and as if the obligation to a righteous life were thereby undermined. Both are equally

in error. The grace of God supplies a most efficacious motive to holiness; and holiness is the inseparable result of the grace of God, when it is received into the heart. The one is the means, the other the end. Can the end be answered without the means? Look at the success of those philosophising schemes of reformation which inculcated the beauty and the excellency of virtue, but applied no adequate motive to the mind. On the other hand, can the doctrines of Christianity be of any use, except as they conduce to their proper end? To allege this would be to degrade the gospel, since its superiority above every other moral system arises from its more powerful effects in meliorating the character and conduct of those who embrace it. In perfect harmony with this view of the subject, we are told in scripture, that the Son of God gave himself for us for the express purpose of *redeeming us from all iniquity, and purifying unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

In order, therefore, to acquire a just view of the Christian dispensation, we must regard a right system of faith, and a righteous and holy life as indissolubly connected. We must consider it as a vain attempt effectually to reform our conduct, unless we embrace the holy principles which Christianity inspires. And on the other hand, we must deem it unnatural, and even impious, to hold the truth in unrighteousness; to exalt the doctrines of the gospel, and to neglect the practical effects which these doctrines were intended to produce. Few indeed avowedly separate the doctrines

of the grace of God from a righteous and holy life, but many do it practically. Many, who will fully admit the holy influence of the gospel, yet act as if the bare reception of its truths were a kind of compensation for, at least, what they would call the lesser sins of man. Hence, with a strange inconsistency, they will say, such a person is, without doubt, a religious man, but he is passionate. Another is exceedingly pious, but he is sullen and morose. A third is very devout, but he is worldly. Is it not plain that a separation is here made between religion and its practical influence? It is supposed that a man can be religious, and yet not gentle: pious, and yet not benevolent: devout, and yet not detached from the world. In the same inconsistent manner do multitudes reason, who are religious on the Sunday while they are wholly engrossed with the world through the week: who can attend with the same punctuality the church and the theatre: who would not on any account neglect the preaching of the gospel, but in their families discover nothing of its benign influence: who very carefully settle the articles of their faith, and hold them strenuously; but take little pains to regulate their temper, evidently overlooking that necessary duty, as if it were no essential branch of religion. In a word, we are chargeable with the same inconsistency whenever the holy doctrines which we believe are not embraced as principles of action, influencing and regulating our whole conduct, teaching us how to feel, to act, to suffer, in our families, in our shops, in our retirements, in our

converse with the world; in short, in all the various circumstances of life.

The inconsistency which I have been condemning, is greatly supported by our resting in general ideas of religion without entering minutely into the detail of its duties; and by our being satisfied with approving generally of its doctrines without a particular application of them to our own cases and circumstances. On the other hand, nothing shews more decidedly a truly upright spirit than the full and complete manner in which religion is applied, with distinctness and particularity, to a man's own case, carried through all the business of life, and made to regulate every part of the conduct. It is an easy thing to express an admiration of the scriptures, to speak in high terms of an excellent treatise on religion, or to be loud in commendation of a pious discourse. But the only solid proof which we can give in either case of *cordial* approbation, consists in the close and faithful application of what we have read or heard to our own consciences; in the alteration we are induced to make in those parts of our temper and conduct which have been shewn to be wrong; and in the abiding nature of the effects which, thro' the blessing of God, have been produced in us. Herod knew that John was a just and holy man: he heard him gladly and did many things because of him. But when John plainly applied his preaching to Herod's own case, and said it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife, then the insincerity of his heart appeared; he could not bear the

application of the doctrine which he had previously professed to approve ; and he put John to death.

The true remedy for this evil is the practice of close and diligent and daily self-examination ; and the habit, not merely of reading the scriptures and hearing sermons, but of applying both, with fidelity, to our own circumstances. The words of a particular text are soon repeated : the propriety of the conduct it inculcates is easily acknowledged. But to examine its contents in detail, and to consider with attention, and with a view to ourselves, the temper and the practice which it enjoins, is a work of no small labor and self-denial. I trust, Mr. Editor, that neither you, nor your readers, will think me presumptuous, if, with a view of lessening the difficulty, I should venture to propose a few questions which every individual may advantageously put to himself ; and on his fair and honest reply to which, as in the presence of God, ought to depend his judgment of his own state.

We acknowledge that man is a sinful and guilty creature, and that naturally his heart is "enmity against God." But are we conformably to this doctrine resisting that desire which we feel to be independent of God ; and are we striving to bring every rebellious thought into subjection to the rules of his holy word ? Do we feel that there is in ourselves an evil heart of unbelief which leads us to depart from God ; and are we, therefore, afraid of loving other things better than God, of trusting to human support rather than to him, of honoring man more than God,

and of valuing the world more than his favor ? Is it our grief that we have hitherto served and obeyed God so imperfectly ; and is it our serious wish and our sincere endeavor to honor him for the future, by setting him ever before our eyes, by making his will the rule of our actions, and his glory our end ? What pains then are we taking to do this ; and wherein do we show that we are in earnest about it ? Unless we are daily and earnestly engaged in resisting and subduing that enmity against God, his law, government, and authority, which so much prevails in all by nature ; what proof can we have of being right in our faith ? Too many there are who, wholly selfish in their views and desires, seek no farther to serve God than they think will be sufficient to prevent their incurring the dreadful effects of his displeasure. But are these true Christians ? Certainly not. The object of the gospel is to teach us to strive against sin, to love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and to make his glory our aim in all that we do. This will readily be acknowledged. But let me ask, is it our unvarying endeavor to exercise that habitual regard to God which will influence us in all we say, do, or think ? Does every thing bow in our esteem to the will and command of God ? Do we adopt those principles and live that kind of life which we know God will approve ; or is there nothing in either which we can alter for his sake ? Do we labor to maintain in our minds a lively sense of his presence ? Do we exercise a constant submission to his will, a constant dependence on his power, wisdom, and goodness ?

Are we habitually thanking him for the mercies we enjoy, ascribing them only to his free and unmerited grace in Christ Jesus; and are we striving by some more substantial proofs than words to testify our gratitude to him? In our troubles, do we look to him alone for deliverance, resigning ourselves to his holy will, and even bearing affliction cheerfully for his sake? Do we value him as our chief good, as the only proper object of our happiness; and do we prove that we do so by preferring no gratification to his favor, by making every requisite sacrifice, and renouncing every evil habit, readily, for his sake? In short, do we set him before us as the witness of our actions, the judge of our conduct, the end of all that we do?

But let me now request your readers to take another view of the subject. They acknowledge, I doubt not, that this is a sinful world, and that therefore a Christian is not to be of the world even as Christ is not of the world, but is to make it his study to "mortify his members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for the which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." Now allow me to enquire, do we really believe this doctrine? Let us bring the matter to a point with our consciences. Are we renouncing the spirit of that world whose friendship is represented as enmity against God? Are we crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts? Are we engaged in a secret warfare with all our evil inclinations, and la-

boring to bring them into subjection, that our hearts may be as a temple sacred only to Christ? If this is the case, how do we show it? Are we daily examining ourselves? With what perverse dispositions are we maintaining this struggle? Are we as much and as earnestly engaged in subduing ourselves, as in pursuing honor, wealth, or worldly comfort? In what do we deny ourselves? I ask not what open and public sacrifices we are making—vanity may prompt to these: nor whether we are imposing penance on ourselves—that is comparatively an easy task. But are we mortifying our vanity, curbing our pride, subduing our self-will, renouncing our love of consequence and power, giving up our own pleasure; and especially are we resisting our besetting sin? Many of the commandments of God, let it be remembered, it is both easy and creditable to fulfil. Herod himself seems to have executed these. But he would not give up the gratification of a criminal passion, from regard to those doctrines of which he acknowledged, generally, the truth.

The due reception of the gospel farther implies the attainment of a meek and quiet spirit. Do we then control our anger? Is the power of religion clearly visible in the restraint which we put upon those ebullitions of passion, and expressions of peevishness, which would otherwise break forth? Can we govern ourselves under provocation? If others are angry with us, are we calm with them? But perhaps some one may say, "My passion is soon over." Yes, this is natural to you: but why was it not restrained by religion? "But

has religion," it may be asked, "any thing to do with our petty quarrels and resentments, which are soon excited and soon allayed?" Yes, for religion consists in restraining these from a regard to God, and reverence to his law. True religion is an habitual restraint on every evil temper: a powerful principle which keeps under and subdues every other which stands opposed to it. It is a principle derived from God, and it should be exercised in the resemblance of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, threatened not.

Then as to covetousness: are our desires of worldly things moderate? Are we contented with our present station, or are we *impatiently* striving to be delivered from its difficulties? Are we apt to be cast down when we meet with disappointment, and easily elated by worldly success? Are we making the wealth or the happiness of this world our principal objects: or are these wholly subordinate to religion? In a word, are we more anxious to possess the favor of God and his peace in our souls, than to possess any earthly treasures? Religion, it is true, does not require that we should relax in the just and proper duties of our calling, or be less diligent, industrious, and frugal than others; but then, if we are living as men whose conversation is in heaven, and whose hearts are chiefly set on things above, we shall pursue our business with far less eagerness than others do: we shall be far more anxious that our children should be holy than that they should be rich: we shall take far more pains to give them

a heavenly inheritance than an earthly one. Our children themselves should be able to perceive that it would make us more happy to see them religious than accomplished or rich.

I would further ask, what it is from which we derive our pleasures? Knowing how impure and polluting many of the sources of earthly pleasure are, and how apt to draw away our hearts from God; are we so indifferent to them, as to renounce them entirely whenever the interests of our souls require it? Are our pleasures derived from other and purer sources, sources pointed out and sanctioned by the law of God, which in this, as in every other particular, ought to be our guide and director? Do we consider eating and drinking as principal sources of gratification; or do we regard them in their true light, as necessary indeed to the support of our bodies, but at the same time as liable to become instruments of temptation, and hindrances to a holy and spiritual life, and therefore requiring to be regulated by the rules of strict temperance?

Thus also are we to guard against the inordinate love of any earthly object. We are to beware lest we should love even a wife, a husband, or a child to such a degree, as to forget that God requires the chief place in our affections. In short, we must be habitually employed, would we really be christians, in watching over and subduing every evil propensity; so that all the thoughts of our hearts may be brought into subjection to the will of God. To hear the gospel preached, to acknowledge its truth, to enjoy a measure of

its comforts, is but a small thing. The essential business of religion consists much more in the secret warfare which I have described ; in carrying our knowledge into practice, and regulating by it our daily conduct.

There is a class of duties which still remains to be noticed, I mean the duties of justice between man and man. The law of God with respect to these is, that we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us ; nay more, that we should seek our neighbor's welfare as truly as our own, and in some points even in preference to our own. Now how are we acting in this respect ? We acknowledge the rule : are we following it ? Can we withstand the temptation of profiting by the ignorance or carelessness of our neighbor ? Shall we be able to say at the day of judgment, " it has been my rule in life to take no advantage of another ? " There will be daily occasions of exercising the principle of true righteousness, if we are influenced by it. It will lead us to judge favorably of our neighbor's actions, and to defend him when unjustly accused ; to rejoice in his prosperity, to sympathize in his distress, to supply his wants as far as we are able ; and, above all, it will teach us to promote the welfare of his soul. It will prevent our flattering him to his hurt, or ministering to his corrupt passions ; and it will induce us faithfully, but kindly, to oppose him when he is in the wrong, though we incur his ill-will by it. There is nothing, perhaps, in which men are apt so much to pride themselves as in the discharge of their duty to their neighbor ; and yet,

when tried by the word of God, there is nothing in which they are generally more deficient.

I have already extended this paper to an unreasonable length, otherwise the enquiry which I have proposed might be branched out into a variety of other particulars. What I have said, however, will suffice to shew the manner in which the genuineness of our faith may be brought to the test, even in cases to which I have not adverted.

If any one of your readers, Mr. Editor, should object to this paper as legal, and as manifesting an ignorance of the grace of the gospel, I would intreat him to peruse, among many similar passages which might be pointed out, the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus. " Speak thou," says the venerable apostle, " the things which become sound doctrine." But what were the things becoming *sound doctrine* respecting which Titus was instructed to preach ? They were the distinct and particular duties of aged men and aged women, of young women and young men, of servants and subjects. We see then how practical the preaching of Titus was required to be, and how particular also : not merely dwelling in generals, as too many are apt to do, and recommending holiness in a loose and vague way ; but entering into the detail of the tempers which his hearers ought to possess, of the duties which they ought to practise, of the sins they ought to avoid : bringing religion home to their families and extending its influence to the ordinary business of life : regulating their whole conduct in such a manner as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to com-

mand the admiration even of heathens. And to confirm this view of the matter, the apostle states it to be the very design of the gospel to produce in all men such a conduct as he had recommended. *For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly in the government of our appetites and passions; righteously in the due discharge of the duties we owe to our neighbor; and godly in the conscientious fulfilment of the duties we owe to God: and that we should be ever looking forward, as the object of all our expectations and hopes, to the second coming of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

M. A.

Some account of the Martyrdom of Polycarp, in the Second Century.

IN the year 167, the persecution which had commenced some years before, raged with increased violence. In Smyrna, many fell victims to its fury, who by their magnanimity, their patience, and their love of the Lord excited general admiration: for though torn with whips till their bodies were laid open even to their veins and arteries; though tormented with fire, condemned to the wild beasts, and exposed to various other tortures; they endured these extremities of suffering with a meekness which astonished the beholders.

After many had sealed their confession of Christ with their blood, the multitude, with insatiable rage, began to call out for Polycarp, who when he received the intelligence was quite unmoved by it. Induced, however, by the intreaties of his people he retired to a small distance from the city, and with a few friends spent day and night in praying for the peace of all the churches in the world. A dream which he had at this time, he told his friends, was a prophetic presage that he should be burnt alive for the cause of Christ.

The place of his retreat being discovered by means of a young man of his household, who was forced by stripes to a confession; his enemies went out at night with arms in their hands to seize him. They found him lying in an upper room whence he might easily have made his escape: but he would not; saying, "the will of the Lord be done." He came down and entered into conversation with those who were present, all of whom greatly admired his age and his composure. Some said, "What need all this stir to apprehend so old a man?" He immediately ordered some refreshment to be set before his pursuers, and requested that in the meanwhile they would allow him time for prayer; which being granted, he continued praying near two hours together, fervently recommending to God the cases of all his friends in every station of life, and the state of the Catholic church throughout the world, to the great astonishment of his hearers, who now began to repent of having any hand in apprehending so divine a character.

His prayer being ended, he was set upon an ass, and led into the city. On the road Herod the Irenarch, or keeper of the peace, and Nicetus his father-in-law, who indeed were the main-springs of the persecution, met him, and taking him up into their chariot, endeavored, by plausible insinuations, to undermine his constancy, asking,—“What harm is it to say, *Lord Cesar*, and to sacrifice, that you may escape?”

Polycarp was silent at first, but being importunately urged, he told them that he could not follow their counsel. On this they loaded him with vehement abuse; and thrust him out of the chariot with such violence that in falling he bruised his thigh. Unmoved, however, by this treatment, he proceeded cheerfully under the conduct of his guard to the hall of judgment. During the tumult which took place on his appearing before the tribunal, a voice from heaven (none seeing the speaker, but many hearing the voice) said, “Polycarp be strong, and play the man.” The pro-consul began to persuade him to recant. “Consider thy great age. Swear by the genius of Cesar, and say, take away the atheists.” The holy martyr, with his hand directed to the surrounding multitude, and his eyes to heaven, said, “Take away the atheists.” The pro-consul still urged him, “Swear, and I will release thee: reproach Christ.”—“Fourscore and six years,” said Polycarp, “have I served him, and he hath never wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my king and my Saviour?” The other still urging him, Polycarp replied, “I am a Christian.” The pro-consul find-

ing it in vain to use persuasion, observed, “I have wild beasts to whom I will expose you, unless you recant.”—“Call them,” answered Polycarp, “we are not to be changed from better to worse, for we hold it only good to turn from vice to virtue.”—“Since you make light of the wild beasts,” says the pro-consul, “I will tame you with fire, if you repent not.”—“You threaten me,” replied the martyr, “with a fire which burns only for a moment, but art ignorant of the eternal fire reserved for the wicked. But why do you delay? Bring forth what you please.” This and much more he spoke with a cheerful confidence, undaunted by menaces, while grace shone in his countenance; so that even the pro-consul himself was astonished at it. The herald then proclaimed that Polycarp had professed himself a Christian; on which the multitude, both of Jews and Gentiles, shouted out, “This is the great doctor of Asia, and the father of the Christians. This is the destroyer of our gods, who teacheth men not to sacrifice or adore.”

They now desired Philip, the Asiarch, to let loose a lion upon him; but he refused, the shews of the wild beasts having been finished. They then demanded that he should be burnt alive; which was done with all possible speed, many of the people, but especially the Jews, being active in procuring fuel. The fire being prepared, Polycarp undressed himself, an office to which he had been unaccustomed, as those around him had, from affection and reverence, always been assiduous in performing it for him. When the execution-

ers, according to custom, were going to nail him to the stake, he begged to remain as he was, for he who gave him strength to endure the fire would enable him to remain unmoved in it: on which they only bound him. He, now standing as a sheep ready for the slaughter, and clasping his hands which were bound behind him, poured out a prayer, in which he gave thanks to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for having counted him worthy to receive a portion with the holy martyrs who had gone before, and to drink of Christ's cup; praying also to be received as an acceptable sacrifice, prepared by God himself, "Wherefore," he adds, "I praise thee for all thy mercies; I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal high priest Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom to thyself and the Holy Ghost be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

When he had finished praying, the executioners lighted the fire, and a great flame burst out, "But behold a wonder," says the church of Smyrna, "seen by many of us! The flames assuming the form of an arch, like the sails of a ship swelled by the breeze, encircled the body of Polycarp, who was in the midst, not as burning flesh but as gold or silver, purified in the furnace, while his body sent forth a delightful fragrantcy as of costly spices." The surrounding croud, however, instead of being convinced were exasperated by the miracle, and commanded a spearman to plunge a sword into his body: on which so much blood flowed from the wound as to extinguish the fire, to the astonishment of the spectators.

But the malice of Satan did not end here; for by means of the Jews, he prompted Nicetus to advise the pro-consul not to grant his body to the Christians, who were desirous of giving it an honorable burial, lest leaving their crucified Master they should begin to worship Polycarp. "They little knew," observes the church of Smyrna, "how impossible it is that we should forsake Christ who died for the salvation of the whole world, or ever worship any other. We adore him as the Son of God; but we love the martyrs on account of their distinguished affection towards their Lord and Master. May we be numbered with them!"

The centurion perceiving the malevolence of the Jews, caused the body to be burnt in the usual manner. The Christians gathered up the bones as a valuable treasure, and interred them, resolving to meet annually at his burying-place to commemorate his martyrdom, and to encourage others to bear a similar testimony to the faith: a circumstance that gave rise to those solemn anniversary commemorations of the martyrs which were generally kept in the first ages, and which were eventually productive of much superstitious abuse.

Thus died Polycarp about the hundredth year of his age; eleven brethren from Philadelphia suffering with him. "But he alone," says the letter already alluded to, "is particularly celebrated by all. He was in truth not only an illustrious teacher, but also an eminent martyr, whose martyrdom all desire to imitate, because it was regulated exactly by evangelical principles.

For by patience he conquered the unjust magistrate, and thus received the crown of immortality; and now exulting with apostles and all the righteous, he glorifies God, even the Father, and blesses our Lord, even the ruler of our bodies, and the shepherd of his church dispersed through the world."

"I cannot but observe," says the learned Dr. Cave, in his account of this eminent saint, "how heavy the divine displeasure, not long after St. Polycarp's death, fell, as upon other places, so more particularly upon this city, by plague, fire, and earthquakes,"—"by which means their city, before one of the glories and ornaments of Asia, was turned into rubbish and dust, their stately houses overturned, their temples ruined;"—"their traffic spoiled, their marts and ports laid waste, besides the great number of people that lost their lives." The account of the holy Polycarp cannot be better closed than by transcribing a passage from Mr. Milner's excellent history, of which free use has been made on the present occasion.

"A comparative view," says that pious and judicious writer, "of a Christian suffering as we have seen Polycarp, with a Roman stoic, or untutored Indian undergoing afflictions, where we have an opportunity to survey all the circumstances, might shew, in a practical light, the peculiar genius and spirit of Christianity, and its divine superiority. At the same time, those who now content themselves with a cold rationality in religion may ask themselves, how it would have fitted them to endure what Polycarp did, and whether something of what is

falsely called enthusiasm, and which the foregoing account breathes so profusely, be not really and solidly divine.

Q.

To the Editors of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

REV. GENTLEMEN,

HAVING taken peculiar satisfaction in perusing the accounts, which have been published in your Magazine, from time to time, concerning the great work of God upon the hearts of sinners, which accounts are calculated both to cheer the hearts of God's people, and call the attention of sinners to the infinite concerns of eternity; I am induced to cast in my mite to promote so desirable an object. I was first delayed in sending the following account because the work among us has been small compared with others which have been published; but when I considered that the work of divine grace, in convincing, renewing, and sanctifying sinners, is a greater display of the divine perfections, than the creation of the whole world, I found no propriety in calling any thing of that nature small. Also I wished to have opportunity for proof concerning this work, whether it was genuine, before it was brought into public view. Being repeatedly solicited by many of my Christian friends, I now send you the following narrative of the work of God in this place; which is submitted to your candid perusal, and, if thought expedient, you are at liberty to make it public.

I

FOR a number of years after my settlement in the work of the gospel ministry in this place, there was a great degree of indifference and stupidity, respecting those things which accompany salvation, both in the minds of professors and others. In this time of declension among us and the adjacent towns, errors of various kinds increased, especially those of the Arians, Socinians, Arminians, and Universalists. Our articles of faith were expressed in very short and general terms, to which, those embracing the above-mentioned errors, as they said, could consistently subscribe; it was thought, therefore, expedient to regulate and revise them, that we might be the better guarded against heresy in the church.

In the year 1800 it was proposed to the church, whether it would not be advisable to revise their articles of faith, and make them more explicit and intelligible; not faulting the old confession for what it did express, but for what it did not.

The proposition met with a favorable reception, in the minds of the brethren present; and they requested me to bring forward such a revision as I should think proper.

According to the desire of the church, I soon presented them with such articles of the Christian faith as I conceived to be agreeable to the tenor of the holy scriptures, in which, I endeavored to bring clearly into view, the leading and fundamental doctrines of the gospel: such as original sin; the total depravity of the human heart; the sovereignty of God; the divinity of Jesus Christ, and God's electing

love through him; the necessity and efficacy of divine grace in the regeneration, sanctification, and the perseverance of the saints; the inexcusableness and criminality of impenitents; and the endless punishment of the wicked in the coming world.

When these articles were laid before the church, for their consideration and remarks, it appeared, that they either were not fully understood, or were absolutely opposed by some of the members. It was, therefore, proposed by some of the brethren, and unanimously voted, to request me to illustrate and vindicate those articles, which I had presented to the church, in public sermons on the Sabbath. I felt it my duty to comply with so reasonable a request: desiring at the same time that they would hear me patiently, till a fair opportunity was given, fully to discuss those important and fundamental principles of the Christian religion.

Having this request granted, I entered upon the arduous undertaking, which I conceived would be the more difficult, as I was satisfied, there were those among us, who were fixedly opposed to some of the leading articles contained in the confession. While I continued in my public discourses on the Sabbath, to illustrate the truths expressed in the articles proposed to be adopted by the church, it proved the occasion of great controversy and contention, and was the common subject of debate among the people of almost every class, both on the Lord's day, when out of public worship, and through the week. The contention was so great, that it was truly alarming in the view

of some, who professed to be friendly both to me and the doctrines which were delivered.— They thought it advisable, for the present, to desist from preaching them. But as they were considered to be the truths of God, and the great pillars of the gospel, in which the divine honor was peculiarly concerned, and without the vindication of which, we, as God's dependent creatures, could not expect his divine interposition and grace in the conviction and salvation of sinners; I was decided in my own opinion, that it was my indispensable duty to proceed, till I should have gone through the whole system, according to the request of the church.

Agreeably to this resolution, I continued to labor and illustrate, in regular order, those truths expressed in the revised articles of faith, every Lord's day, for more than a year, only when some special occasion required a different subject. But before I had accomplished this laborious undertaking, I found to my unspeakable joy and satisfaction, that, indeed, the Lord was on our side, by his special grace, applying to the hearts and consciences of the people, those gospel truths which I had been laboring to illustrate and enforce, and which some had been equally opposing.

The first appearance of the work was upon a man of about forty-five years of age, who was not more friendly to the cause of truth than all natural men; yet he did not attend to, or regard the subject of religion sufficiently to oppose it. His heart and mind were wholly swallowed up in the pursuit of worldly wealth. It might be said of him,

that 'The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choaked the word, that it became unfruitful.' By his own account, it appeared, that he had been under serious impressions, for about two years; although this was not known by any person, even the wife of his bosom, until after he thought he was made a subject of divine grace.

This was very unexpected and therefore very surprising to the people. It was on Lord's day, March 15, 1801. As the temper of his heart was apparently renewed, so his conversation was upon new subjects, even spiritual and divine things, which from his mouth, were never heard before.

It is hardly conceivable with what astonishment, his friends and neighbors would stand and admire to hear the gracious words which dropped from his lips; while he spake to them of the infinite value of their souls, and the importance of being interested in that happiness, which Christ had purchased, for poor perishing sinners. He from experience, admonished them of the danger of having their souls ensnared with worldly subjects, to the neglect of that good part which cannot be taken away from them. This called up the attention of some, particularly, to the subject of experimental religion, and led them to conceive it to be a reality.

About a month after this there was another very unexpected conversion. An old gentleman who had entered upon the seventy-sixth year of his age; and had spent his days to that advanced period, in the service of sin. He was particularly noticed for profaneness and irreligion. Be-

ing rationally convinced, that he was in the last part of his life, he began to think it necessary to have some religion, when he died, or he must be wretched. For about three years previous to his conversion, he embraced the scheme of universal salvation. He had been taught, that Christ had died to effect the salvation of all men, that his work was done, his happiness secure, and he had nothing to fear; that if he would believe the doctrine, he might take the comfort of it, and die in peace. Such preaching as this, being perfectly agreeable to a heart long accustomed to the love and practice of sin, he most cordially embraced and rested thereon, as the only foundation of his hope, in which he expected to live and die. But at this time, one stronger than the strong man armed, came upon him, and overcame him, and took from him all his armour, wherein he trusted and divided his spoils. When he brought eternal things into view, his hope fled like chaff before the wind. He found himself in a lost and wretched condition, without God, and without hope in the world, and eternity just before him.

But it pleased God, of his abundant mercy, to appear for him, in this critical moment, and pluck him as a brand from the burning, and give his soul to rejoice at the manifestation of God's glorious character, as a righteous and just God, who would eternally vindicate his own law and character, against wicked men and devils. This proved, to a demonstration, to observing minds, among his acquaintance, that a man, when he was old, both in years and sin, could be born again. His fol-

lowing life and conversation bespake, that he was created anew in Christ Jesus; and that his great aim was to live to the glory of God. To use his own words, being asked how old he was? about eighteen or twenty months after his conversion, he replied, 'Through divine goodness, I have had an existence in God's world seventy-seven years; but I have not lived two.'

This very singular instance was the occasion of seriously impressing the minds of those who were within the circle of his particular acquaintance.

There was an unusual collection on the Sabbath, and attention to the word preached, with an increased application for public lectures, in different quarters of the town, through the course of the week.

About this time, it pleased the great dispenser of divine grace to call two others, out of the kingdom of darkness, into his marvellous light.

One was a woman, who, in the view of some of her most intimate acquaintance was thought a Christian, and at certain times she was ready to conclude the same of herself, which opinion was grounded upon her external morality. But now she was brought to realize that her former hope would be as the spider's web, and the giving up of the ghost. She found by diligent self-examination, as she expressed herself, 'That she had lived forty years in the world, and had never given her heart to the Lord.'

At a public conference held at the meeting-house, where was a large assembly collected, after this woman had obtained a wonderful relief in her mind, at

the desire of a number of Christian friends, she related before them all the great trials through which she had passed; and the mistaken opinion which she, and perhaps others might have entertained, concerning her Christian character; and also the way and manner in which God had been manifested to her soul. She expressed her strong attachment to, and delight in the Saviour of lost men, as being superior to every worldly object and human character. She most urgently invited all who were strangers to Christ and the excellency of the gospel salvation, to come, taste and see that the Lord is good. Those, who might have had a hope that they were Christians, she exhorted, to give all diligence, and see that their hearts were right with God. All which was done in such an interesting, pathetic and feeling manner, that there was scarcely a tearless eye in the whole assembly. This being accompanied by the power of divine grace, proved an occasion of giving the work a more general and thorough spread thro' the different parts of the town, both among professors and non-professors. This was truly a very searching time. Many awoke from their sleepy profession, and shaking themselves as from the dust, expressed a new zeal and engagedness for the prosperity of Zion. Others were shaken, even from their foundation, being constrained to give up their former hopes, as refuges of deception and lies, and were led to begin their work anew, laying the foundation of their hope alone upon Christ their rock. And others who had expressed the greatest indifference, both in respect to their

own, and the salvation of others, now were brought with attention and anxiety to enquire, 'What shall we do to be saved?'

For several months it was a very serious time among us. The mind of almost every one, was struck with an unusual solemnity. The attention of many was called up to the momentous concerns of eternity. We have reason to fear, however, but few were the chosen subjects of regenerating grace. The number of thirty have been added to the church, in this revival. Others retain their serious impressions, and still give evidence, that they are friendly to Christ and his cause; yet neglect publicly to profess his name, thro' self-diffidence, and a jealousy over the deceitfulness of their own hearts, lest they should proclaim that to the world, which they had never done heartily to the Lord. I cannot, however, but hope, that ere long, the darkness will be dispelled, and their doubts removed, which at present seem to obstruct their way in coming forward publicly, to profess Christ before this adulterous generation.

This work of the Holy Spirit seemed to affect, principally, the minds of parents and heads of families, although the minds of youth were arrested for a time, to consider what these things meant. There were but one or two instances of hopeful conversion among the youth: This I conceive to be different from revivals in general.

Among those whose minds were the most seriously impressed, it was a common observation, The present call, from God to them by his Holy Spirit, was, most probably, the last they

should ever receive, and should they resist and grieve away the heavenly messenger, they should never expect again to have their attention called to spiritual concerns; but be left to hardness of heart and blindness of mind, till they were ripe for endless ruin. Thus, in their own view, they could say as it respected themselves, *Behold, now is the accepted time: Behold, now is the day of salvation!* Nothing was more terrifying to them, than returning back to their former state of thoughtless security. The trials of many, while under convictions, were peculiarly great and pressing. I recollect the observation of one while under the pressure of her own guilt, and the threatening of the divine law; she said, 'I could cheerfully be burnt at the stake, if thereby, I might be liberated from my present distress for my soul.' The reply was, The sacrifice of the body cannot atone for the sin of the soul. Nothing but the precious blood of the immaculate Jesus can cleanse the soul from sin, and liberate us from the condemning sentence of that law, which is holy, just and good.

Some persons, at first, seemed to discover great beauty in the divine character, and to be greatly transported with joy and delight; but, in process of time, were ready to give up their hope, from a view of the great wickedness of their own hearts. Many were ready to say, 'Can it be, that a heart, so vile as mine, was ever renewed by the Holy Ghost?' From this consideration, there was a great backwardness, in the minds of many, in coming forward to join themselves to the visible church of

Christ, lest, by their irregular conduct, they should wound the cause of their dear Lord; and coming unworthily to the Lord's table, they should eat and drink judgment to themselves.

The work, so far as we are able to discern, was genuine. Not a single instance of apostasy has appeared among those who have given us charitable ground to hope they were the subjects of regenerating grace.

Those doctrines of divine grace, which met with such violent opposition among the people, previously to the awakening, were now witnessed and confirmed by the experience and declaration of those who were hopefully enlightened and sanctified by the spirit of truth. When the Lord opened their hearts, they no longer disputed their total vileness, and the necessity of the powerful and energetic influences of the Holy Spirit to create them anew; and that it was of the Lord to have mercy on whom he would have mercy. The doctrine of election, in particular, which some could not endure but with abhorrence, and which they were wont to esteem very discouraging to sinners, now became their only encouragement and hope; and was sweeter to them than honey and the honey comb.

This however, is not the case with all. The beauty of those doctrines, to some, appears to be hid, as was said by an inspired apostle. *If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them, who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

But if it may be agreeable to the purpose of God, it is our earnest prayer and constant labor that they might be savingly acquainted with God and themselves, and the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

From my own experience and observation I am fully persuaded, that my labor the year preceding the revival, in illustrating and enforcing the important and fundamental doctrines of the gospel, which, in their own nature, tend to exalt God, and abase the feelings of corrupt men, was as great a mean in the hands of God, of producing that spiritual harvest, which we received the year following, as richly manuring and faithfully cultivating the natural soil, is a direct mean of producing a plentiful harvest in the field. It was like breaking up the fallow ground, and did so convince the understandings of carnal and selfish minds, that when the gentle dews of divine grace descended, they were prepared for the reception of the good seed of the word; and it sprang up and bare fruit thirty fold, to the praise of God's efficacious grace.

ELIJAH LYMAN.

Brookfield, (Vt.) }
May 20, 1805. }

An Explanation of Scriptural Types.

NO. VII.

The destruction of Sodom Typical. Gen. xix.

EXTREMELY various have been the judgments with which an holy God hath punished a wicked world, and the sinful na-

tions of the earth. Among these the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities about them, occupies a distinguished and awful rank. The region of those cities appears to have exceeded in pleasantness of situation, and fertility of soil. It was as the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt as thou comest to Zoar. Gen. xiii. 10. the amenity of the situation and luxuriance of the soil produced in the inhabitants, that pride, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness, that voluptuousness, dissipation, and those abominable vices which procured their destruction. The history tells us, figuratively speaking, that the enormity of their wickedness was incredible in heaven. The Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great—I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, and if not, I will know. Chap. xviii. 20, 21.—The men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly: and God determined to make them monuments of his righteous vengeance. But righteous Lot resided among the corrupt inhabitants, and God would not destroy the righteous with the wicked. He therefore directed him to escape to Zoar. No sooner had this holy man retired from the polluted city, than the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon it from heaven and destroyed it with a terrible, a perpetual destruction.—That this dispensation was designedly typical, is evident from the frequent application of it to spiritual subjects in the inspired writings.—For if God spared not the angels that sinned—and turning the cities of Sodom and

Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample (type) to those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, &c. 2. Pet. ii. Is not Christ's description of future punishment by casting into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, taken from it? Perhaps no two scriptural types are so analogous to each other as the destruction of the old world by a deluge of water, and the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven; for which reason we find them repeatedly combined for the same purpose. Matt. xxiv. 2 Pet. ii. In this dispensation are not the following evangelical subjects impressively represented?

I. The destruction of the wicked inhabitants of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven, typifying the eternal destruction of the wicked in hell.

The wickedness of the inhabitants of Sodom, and particularly their persecution of righteous Lot, immediately procured their destruction; and the wickedness of the world, and particularly the persecution of the godly, will immediately procure the dissolution of the heavens and earth.* The Lord rained fire and

* Gen. xix. The men of the city compassed the house, both old and young, all the people from every quarter—then the Lord rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed those cities. How parallel with this is Rev. xx. 7, Satan, shall go out into the four quarters of the world, Gog and Magog to gather them together to battle: and they went up and compassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven and destroyed them? Was not the latter description apparently taken from the former?

brimstone from the Lord out of heaven and destroyed those cities; and upon the wicked God will rain snares, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest. In Sodom and Gomorrah thus destroyed, turned into a lake and subjected to a perpetual destruction, so said to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude v. have we not a very impressive and glowing description of the eternal perdition of the wicked in hell, the lake that burns with fire and brimstone for ever and ever?

II. In the city of Zoar, have we not a direct representation of Christ, that hiding place from the storm and covert from the heat, which God hath most graciously provided for his people, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; but especially from that horrible tempest which he will rain upon the wicked, when he shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel of his Son?

III. In the flight of Lot to Zoar, and his preservation from the destructive flames of Sodom, have we not an instructive representation of believers fleeing to Christ from the wrath to come, and their preservation from eternal ruin by him?

And the men said to Lot, We will destroy this place. And the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city: And while he lingered the men laid hold upon his hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and brought him forth without the city and said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, lest thou be consumed. In a similar manner, hath not God ad-

monished his people of the destruction which he will execute upon the wicked, and warned them to flee from a sinful, guilty state, and impending ruin? But attached to the pleasures of sin and earthly pursuits, they contemplate abandoning sensual gratifications and delights with reluctance, and delaying and lingering, the Lord, being gracious to them, by his almighty hand, lays hold of them and brings them from their guilty and dangerous condition, constrains them to escape for their lives, and flee for refuge to Christ, the blessed hope set before them—and being finally gathered together into the heavenly chambers, they will be effectually secured from the fiery indignation, and for ever preserved in perfect safety and peace—while upon the wicked, disregarding divine admonitions, as idle tales, the day of the Lord will come, which will burn as an oven and consume them that it leave them neither root nor branch.

Lot escaped the destruction of Sodom but as with the skin of his teeth; and the righteous are scarcely saved from final ruin—but his wife looked back from behind him and became a pillar of salt: and how many who are awakened to a conviction of their danger, and as it were fleeing from the wrath to come, for looking back with lustful eyes upon the pleasures of sense and sin, and delaying to forsake all for Christ and salvation, are given over to a reprobate mind, and become vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? *Remember Lot's wife.*

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into

Zoar, and the inhabitants of Sodom were probably preparing to indulge themselves in their habitual voluptuousness and dissipation;—but this fair and pleasant morning was succeeded by a tempestuous and stormy day, which brought destruction upon them as a whirlwind: and how many in the ardent pursuits of sensual delights, are unexpectedly surprised and arrested by death, and go quick down to the pit? And when a stupid world shall cry, Peace and safety, then will sudden destruction come upon them, and *they shall not escape.*

In this awful dispensation, how much is there to instruct and comfort the godly? The unlawful deeds of the filthy Sodomites vexed the righteous soul of Lot, from day to day. Abraham had interceded for him, and when God destroyed them, he remembered (the intercession of) Abraham, and mercifully provided for the safety of Lot by sending him to Zoar. The Lord said *I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.* The Lord knoweth as well how to deliver the godly, as to reserve the wicked to the day of judgment to be punished.—The men with their slaughter weapons, Ezek. ix. might not smite till a *mark was set upon the forehead of those who sighed for the abominations* of Jerusalem, and then they were to slay old and young and not spare. *They shall be mine,* says God, in the day that I make up my jewels. How much to admonish the wicked! Let them turn to their strong hold in a day of acceptance and time of salvation. Amen.

Character and Writings of Justin Martyr.

HE was unquestionably a man of exalted piety and holiness, deeply affected by a concern for the honor of God and the interests of true religion, and ardently desirous of promoting the salvation of men. He had embraced Christianity after a long and serious examination; having found in this divine revelation, what he had in vain searched after in the various systems of human philosophy, the knowledge of the only true God, and the way to obtain both present and eternal happiness. The influence of Christian principles upon his dispositions and conduct is strikingly evident in his life and writings. His love to the souls of men prompted him to receive all who came to him for instruction; and was probably the reason of his persevering in the profession of philosophy, instead of assuming the ecclesiastical character. He thought, perhaps, that his former habits of life might tend to abate the prejudices of other philosophers, and induce them to examine and embrace Christianity: and though, in the case of Justin, this expectation proved fallacious, we cannot but approve the motive from which he acted; and we recommend to those who, like him, possess much of human learning, to consecrate it to the service of God, by similar endeavors to gain the wise and the great of this world to the gospel of Christ. How earnestly this learned and pious father was engaged in propagating the truth, appears not only from the pathetic exhortation which he delivered to his friends

upon his conversion to Christianity, but from the boldness and freedom with which he addressed the Roman Emperors and Senate in his Apologies. He told them how much it was their duty to esteem the truth; that his object was not to flatter them, but to persuade them to examine the question impartially, and to determine justly; that if they did not, they would be inexcusable before God, and could not possibly escape his future judgment. In a similar manner he declares, in his conference with Trypho, that he regarded nothing but the truth, not caring whom he disobliged in this great and important pursuit. Yet all this zeal in the cause of Christianity was tempered with the most cordial love to all mankind, and even to his bitterest enemies. From none did he and his brethren suffer greater enmity and opposition than from the Jews: yet he tells Trypho that they heartily prayed for the Jews, and all other persecutors, that they might repent, and ceasing to blaspheme Christ, might believe in him, and be saved from eternal vengeance at his glorious appearing; that though the Jews were wont solemnly to curse them in their synagogues, and to join with any that would persecute them unto death, yet they returned no other answer than this—"You are our brethren, we beseech you to own and embrace the truth of God." And in his Apology to the Emperor and Senate, he thus concludes—"I have nothing more to add, but that so far as in us lies, we shall endeavor, and heartily pray, that the whole world may be blessed with the knowledge and belief of the truth."

Such are the leading features in the character of this great man, so far as his piety is concerned. With respect to his natural endowments, and his acquired learning and abilities, more especially as they appear in his writings, something remains to be said. He was evidently possessed both of considerable genius and of sound judgment. These talents he had carefully cultivated and improved by the diligent study and pursuit of human learning and philosophy ; so that, according to the testimony of Photius, he had arrived at the very height, and abounded in every kind of knowledge. His learning, however, as might naturally be expected from his birth and education, was chiefly confined to the writings of the Heathen philosophers. Of the Hebrew language, like many of the early fathers, he knew but little ; as appears from some inaccuracies which are to be met with in his dialogue with Trypho. But with this exception, his great abilities and learning are plainly discernible in his writings which are yet extant (to say nothing of those which are lost,) and which, as Eusebius observes, remain as monuments of his singular endowments ;—of a mind studiously conversant about divine things, and richly fraught with excellent and useful knowledge. These are all intended either to defend Christianity against both the Jews and Gentiles, or to oppose that common religion and those profane and absurd rites of worship which then governed the world ; or to prescribe rules for the ordinary conduct of the Christian life.

The opinions of Justin were,

in general, perfectly consistent with what are usually termed the orthodox doctrines. In his Dialogue with Trypho he explains and defends, against the objections of the Jew, the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, in a clear and decisive manner ; considering it as plainly revealed both in the Old and New Testament.—In his first Apology, also, he expressly acknowledges the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, telling the Emperor, in explanation of the common charge against Christians, of Atheism, that they did not, indeed, worship the gods commonly so called, but that they worshipped and adored the true God and his Son, and the prophetic Spirit, honoring them in word and in truth. This learned father strongly inculcates in his writings the necessity of the enlightening influence of divine grace, to enable any one to understand the truth. He explains, also, in his first Apology, his views concerning regeneration, and the forgiveness of past sins through Jesus Christ. In the Dialogue with Trypho, he states the doctrine of justification in the same manner as we find it in the Epistle to the Galatians, that is, as opposed to any dependence on the works of the law, and as entirely the gift of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

Religious Intelligence.

Abstract of the account of the protestant missions in the East Indies for the year 1803, published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in their last annual report.

THE Rev. Messrs. Kolhoff and Holzberg, in a letter dated

at Tanjore, 29 Dec. 1802, state that they had attended to the congregations and schools in that place, and that they and their native assistants had also made several journies to publish the word of God in various towns and villages of the Tanjore province, and that by the blessing of God, several new congregations had been lately formed.—

At Kanandagudi, a village 18 miles from Tanjore, about 40 families had come to the resolution of renouncing the worship of their dumb idols, and turning unto God; and having been carefully instructed they were admitted into the congregation by baptism. At Adanjour a village 17 miles from Tanjore, 9 families had received baptism; and, there being several Christian families near it, they had erected a temporary building for divine worship, and had stationed there a catechist assistant, who had been found faithful in the discharge of his duty. At Leraloor, five miles from Tanjore, 7 families had been brought to the knowledge of the gospel; and there being some Christian families in the neighboring villages, a neat brick and tiled chapel had been erected by a member of their congregation, named Sandoshee Pulley, who held an employment in the company's service. The chapel was finished during Mr. Gericke's progress through the country, and it was opened by him on the 5th of November, 1802, by prayer, and a sermon from Rom. xii. 1, 2.—After the sermon, 24 persons received the holy sacrament, 9 of whom were members of this new congregation; and 19 catechumens, who had been ten weeks under instruction, were

baptized. It is with much satisfaction the missionaries report that the far greater number of these converts were not ashamed to confess the name of Christ, but endeavored to honor the holy religion they had embraced, by a conformity to those sacred truths and duties, in which they had been instructed. They also inform the Society, that, by God's gracious Providence, they had finished the school-house at Tanjore, which would accommodate above 1000 children.—There being a large congregation at Pudapatts, situated westward of Tanjore, a chapel had been erected there, and opened last July. An able catechist, educated by the late Mr. Swartz, was stationed at that place, and had hitherto given satisfaction to the Missionaries, by attention to his duty. At Kanandagudi, a small spot of ground had been purchased, and a temporary building for divine worship was intended to be erected as soon as possible.

The increase of the Tamulian congregation had been considerable. In the year 1801, they baptized 366, among whom were 50 infants born of Christian parents; they had received 21 from the popish communion; they administered the Sacrament to 599 persons; they had married 12 couples, and buried 29 bodies. In the year 1802, they had baptized 328, among whom were 63 born of Christian parents; they had received from Popery 34; they had administered the Sacrament to 585 persons; they had married 21 couples, and buried 36 bodies.

There were 8 scholars in the English school, and in the Provincial schools of Tanjore and Cum-

bagonam, about 40. In the Tamulian school, consisting only of children born in the congregation, 33 seminarists were in training to serve as catechists, besides whom, there were 85 charity boys, 28 day scholars, and 36 girls.

The Missionaries at Tranquebar, and Mr. Gericke at Madras, had kindly furnished them with Tamulian books, to the utmost of their power, but not adequately to their wants; and they had been supplied with bibles from Tranquebar, for the Tanjore and Palamcotta Missions.

In the month of September, they had been visited by Mr. Pohle, of whose state of health they gave a very indifferent account.

The Rev. Mr. Gericke, in a letter dated at Vepery, 14 Feb. 1803, informs the Society that he had recently been through the Mysore country, and thence to Palamcotta, visiting all their congregations, and that it had pleased God to awaken a sense of religion in the inhabitants of whole villages, insomuch that of their own accord they had sought instruction from the neighboring Christians, and their catechists, and from Sattianaden, and had wished anxiously for his coming, to be farther instructed and baptized. The first of these villages, to which he had been called, was newly built by Catechumens, who had before lived in neighboring places, and their church was finished when he arrived to preach and baptize in it. In four other villages, the inhabitants being unanimous in their resolution of embracing the Christian faith, put away their idols, and converted their temples into Christian churches,

and were instructed and baptized in them. For another new village, and church for Catechumens, that lived dispersed, he had bought a piece of ground, and instructed and baptized in it, under a temporary shade. On his departure from the Tinnavelly country, where this had happened, messages were received from many villages, requesting him to stay a few months longer, and to do in their villages what had been done in others. Not conceiving himself at liberty to do so, he had recommended them to Sattianaden, the old catechists, and the new assistants. By these means, there had been instructed, and baptized, about twice the number that he had baptized, which were above 1300. But, extraordinary as these conversions of several thousands were, no less extraordinary was the persecution suffered from their heathen neighbors, and particularly from some men in office under the Collector. The very night on which he returned to Vepery, he received a letter on the melancholy subject; and nothing prevented his return to that part of the country, but serious indisposition. Mr. Kolhoff, however, had resolved to visit the new congregations, and with the assistance of Mr. Gericke's letters, he trusted relief would be afforded; and the presence of so good a pastor as Mr. K. would tend, by God's grace, to comfort them all, and to confirm and strengthen the weak among them. Sattianaden seemed to be quite depressed at the cruelties exercised upon the Christians, and the reports daily brought to him from all quarters. One of the congregations had lately written to Mr. Gericke,

that were it not for the fear of hell, and the hope of heaven, such were their sufferings, that they should all throw themselves into the sea.

In the different congregations under Mr. G. near Madras, about 200 persons had been baptized, of whom 42 were adults.

Mr. Gericke, in another letter, dated at Vepery, 7th May, 1803, states that he had made such arrangements with respect to the stationing of the Missionaries, that he hoped Mr. Kolhoff might be able to go through his various and arduous duties, until it should please God to send them help from Europe.

'It seems,' Mr. G. observes, 'that if we had faithful and discreet laborers, for the vineyard of the Protestant Mission on this coast, to send, wherever a door is opened unto us, rapid would be the progress of the Gospel. Our native teachers, though some of them may not be inferior to us in the knowledge of the great truths of the Gospel, and in the manner of communicating them, still their discourses carry not that weight with them, that is felt when we speak to the natives. They never gain that confidence that is placed in an European, when they are once convinced that he is actually what he exhorts them to be. Without good Missionaries, true disciples of Jesus Christ, from home, the work of the Mission, it seems, would lose its respectability, even though the native teachers were good men; and Missionaries, without the spirit and mind of Christ, and as full of the world as the natives are, would soon make the Mission the most graceless thing imaginable.'

It has pleased God, Mr. G. observes, to lead them these several years, through great anxieties with regard to the Mission, but they have observed and believe, that a kind Providence watches over it; and such help as seemed absolutely necessary for its preservation, has always been furnished in due time.— This keeps their hopes alive, and prevents them from losing their energy.

The Rev. Mr. Pohle, in a letter dated at Trichinapally, 10th March, 1803, states that in the course of the last year, he had baptized 47, (including 5 Heathens) and had had 200 communicants, including 43 English. In the English school, there were about 50 scholars, and in the Malabar school about 10. The Malabar congregation amounted to 205, and the Portuguese to 77, all of them in and about Trichinapally. The catechists and schoolmasters continued in the service of the Mission, and its concerns had been fully attended to. All had enjoyed good health, excepting himself: he had been much indisposed, but was then able to resume his ministerial functions, both towards the Mission and the garrison. The military were regularly at church, notwithstanding their residence at a considerable distance from it.

The Rev. the Danish Missionaries, in a letter dated at Tranquebar, 9th Feb. 1803, acknowledge the receipt of the society's presents sent out to them the preceding year, which they consider as encouragements to a perseverance in the faithful discharge of their duty, that the spiritual misery of the natives, and the bodily distress of many

poor persons, may be lessened. They express an anxiety for the receipt of printing paper, as their press was constantly engaged in working off books, for the use of the Malabar Christians, and lately for the new congregations, which in great numbers had recently been baptized by Mr. Gericke, many of whom, not having yet been able to get books enough for their instruction, had written the Catechism and Prayers on palmyra leaves, which they had rehearsed to Mr. Gericke, in a manner beyond his expectation.

Their hearts had been filled with praise to God, for the progress which the gospel of Christ had lately made amongst the heathen; and they considered it as an extraordinary Providence, tending to the furtherance of Christian knowledge, that the country was under a Christian government, which they trusted would lend its benevolent and protecting hand to lessen the perils that had attended the reception of Christianity, and to encourage its introduction.—Hence the natives would learn how to fear God, to honor the king, to obey the laws, and to become industrious and faithful subjects, as well as to reject their foolish and often most cruel superstitions. Of the latter, they had had, within the last year, a striking instance, when two women were suffered to be burnt alive, with the corpse of the late Rajah Amersing, a circumstance that afterwards produced a series of fantastic follies. Several women pretended to be possessed with the spirit of one of the burnt women, and affected to produce wonderful cures among the sick. The imposition was,

however, at length checked, and the impostors punished by the Collector, and even by the present Rajah, Serfogee.

Mr. Cammerer has kindly gone to Tanjore, to take care of Mr. Kolhoff's charge, whilst he was with the new congregations, to strengthen and comfort them in their distresses, brought on by some heathen enemies, who were indignant that whole villages, with their chiefs, had embraced the Christian doctrine, and converted their pagodas into Christian churches, after having broken their idols to pieces, and buried them deep in the ground. Like Nero, and Dioclesian, these heathens imputed every theft and mischief to the Christians; and, as heathen chiefs, averse from Christianity, easily raised every complaint against them, some had been chastised, and treated in a pitiful manner. The last accounts, however, they thank God, had happily reported, that the collector was kindly disposed to the Christians, and had put a stop to the injustice and machinations of their enemies. Catechists and schoolmasters, to a certain extent, with Malabar bibles, catechisms, and other books, had been furnished, but there was great need of other Missionaries.

The Tranquebar Mission had last year been increased by 112 children born of Christian parents, 11 converts from Heathenism, and 5 converts from Popery. In the Tamulian schools, 160 children were maintained, besides those in the adjacent villages, and farther in the country. In the Portuguese school, 40 orphans were supported, and 48 day scholars taught. Nineteen couple had been married, 1290

had received the Lord's supper, and 72 had been buried.

The Rev. Mr. Holzberg, in a letter dated at Cuddalore, 12th Oct. 1803, reports the much lamented death of the valuable and excellent Mr. Gericke, at Vellore on the 2d of that month.

The loss was sincerely felt by Mr. Holzberg in particular, as he had been accustomed to look up to Mr. G. as a friend and a father. The Society, he observes, had lost a most faithful servant; the mission its second pillar; and all India a benefactor, and an eminent example of piety and virtue, whose righteous footsteps, he prays God that he may be enabled to follow.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Thomas Robbins, Missionary in New-Connecticut, dated June 8, 1805.

"IT is with pleasure I inform you that the Holy Spirit appears in some degree to give us testimonies of his blessed and holy presence. In Canfield, divine grace appears to have called the attention of many to the interests of eternal things. In the winter past, a very great degree of stupidity and vanity possessed the minds of the people generally; but early in the spring it appeared that several people were under very deep concern for the safety of their souls. I went there soon after, and a very great earnestness was manifested in many to receive in-

struction. Some appeared at length to get relief, that which I trust is saving, and many more were bowed down with fear and trembling before a holy God. May 12th, I preached there, and administered the sacrament. It was a very solemn season. Three persons were admitted as members of the Church, who had obtained hopes but a few weeks before. Several others were deeply impressed and very much affected. In this place there have been no bodily affections. The work proceeds like the still, small voice of Jehovah, carrying the clearest evidence to any observing mind, that it is verily the work of Almighty God.

"Divine Providence appears wonderfully to favor the cause of truth in this country. Our infant churches appear to stand firm, to have the visible countenance of the great head of the Church, and to promise to be hereafter worthy members of the visible kingdom of the Redeemer.

"Since the beginning of the present year, I have been taking pains to make an actual enumeration of the families in this county. The work I have just completed. There are families in 64 Towns. The number of families, the first of Jan. 1804, was about 800. The first of last January there were a little more than 1100; of these 450 are from New-England. There are 24 schools, and 7 Churches, and more than 20 places where the worship of God is regularly maintained on the Sabbath.

Donation to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.

July 9. From the sale of Summary of Christian Doctrines. § 3 37